

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL/THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH/815 SECOND AVENUE/NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017

ter H. Boyd, Press Officer
i. Drew Dearnaley, Assistant Press Officer

Telephone: (212) 867-8400

79379

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ARCHBISHOP OLANG
OF KENYA RETIRES

NAIROBI, Kenya -- The Most Rev. Festo Habbakuk Olang has retired as Archbishop of the Church in the Province of Kenya in a move that seems to have caught many Kenyan Anglicans and journalists by surprise.

According to "Target," a publication of the National Council of Churches of Kenya, the archbishop announced his plans at a special Provincial Standing Committee meeting where, "Target" reported, only four of the seven dioceses were definitely represented. It was announced after the meeting that the archbishop had resigned for purposes of retirement and that he was required to do so because he has reached the age of 65, the canonical age for retirement in the Province.

The journal reported that the standing committee had the power to extend Archbishop Olang's tenure for up to five years, but declined to do so. The newspaper implied that tribalism and internal difficulties were behind the move and stated that the decision -- on relatively short notice -- surprised many church people.

The archbishop was ordained priest in 1950 and consecrated a bishop in Kampala, Uganda in 1955. He served later as suffragan and then diocesan bishop of Maseno, Kenya before being translated to Nairobi and elected archbishop and metropolitan in 1970. He is the first archbishop of the Province which includes the entire nation and contains, according to Anglican Consultative Council figures, nearly 600,000 members.

Archbishop Olang has been until recently president of the Conference of Anglican Provinces of Africa. In 1977 he received an honorary degree from the University of the South, Sewanee, Tenn.

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